1/13/69

Dear Vince,

Having just had to decide against going to New York to look out for my own interests, in this case legal, vis-a vis-Dell, which owes me much money and is silent - the alternative is to complete even less of what I should before going to N.O. - I again write you to emphasize what I mentioned yesterday by phone.

This should not be my obligation alone. You know what the consequences would have been had I not occupied myself in New Orleans as I have for the past more than a year. It is something from which I have no chance of personal gain, for I've written my book and that (and gotten not a cent from it). It is, in fact, at the cost of other work I'd prefer doing, as you know. You also know how acutely unpleasant it has been for me to do this.

Sylvia, who could not find a cent when I was first plumbing the Archives to help me buy a single Xerox, has money for Thornley. There is limitless financing for all the jerks and frauds, for paid vacations in the guise of work. for all the futilities that are California.

As everyone knows, I will do what I must whether or not others help. Perhaps a little less, but not much. The difference may be in how long I can do it, but that will make no difference in the New Orleans instance.

However, it is a real burden, one I feel I should not bear alone. I do put in all the time, and it is extensive, as you have seen, with no income. Everyone else has something, almost all have some kinds of incomes. Thus small things become major, and they do, I think effect my effeciency. The $14-$15 I have spent on postage alone on this in the past four weeks is enormous when in that time I have not had any income at all. And this is a minor cost. Today I will not be able to continue copying the documents I must take with me simply because I have run out of 3M paper. I had to delay the reorder until the last minute, for a box is $35-$40 I do not have, and this time they are late shipping it! The only other need I have for the machine, which cost me $350.00, or the paper, is to make my work available to others working in the field. And every three months I have to scrounge around trying to raise the interest on this additional part of my indebtedness, which, as a consequence of what I have been doing, is now about $40,000. Can you imagine what this is, when I have been five years without income?

Everyone is nice, everyone says fine things, but no one really does anything. So far as I can find out, Gary, Paul and I are today the only ones doing any real work. They do it part-time. You have seen what my unpublished work is, you have an inkling of what I have yet to come. All of this daily becomes more of a problem, more difficult, more intolerable, and daily I get closer to the point of financial ruin. I today have up for sale a property on which, in ten year, I could retire for the rest of the long life I hope to have, if I could hold it that long - and only to pay the debt I have incurred. People went out and raised the money for Jaffe to go to Europe - and need I tell you for what - without question. That would have printed 10,000 copies of my two books. So, what I am telling you is there is help for everyone else.

I think it is past time when others should have done something not to help me, for I ask nothing for myself, but to pay some of the actual cost of what I do. Going out to California in 1966, abandoning WHITEWASH II to do it at Maggie and Bill's behest, cost me about $500.00 The reason was to get Liebeler off Lane's back, meaning also off Maggie's, Bill's, and everyone elses. Maggie's contribution was a sandwich.

Bil took care of most of my needs in LA. The entire cost was mine, and I did it at their request, and at the cost of promoting - really even shipping out - my own book then coming off the presses. My trips to California, none of which was for a selfish purpose, have cost me about $1,000 despite the several promises to pay my expenses. Remember, I also went out that to salvage Jim when he loused up on Hall and Howard, and I did the impossible, got them both to go to N.O. voluntarily. What I got from Jim was his taking credit for this, to the press, for himself and in my presence! plus his frequent plugs for Mark on TV and in interviews, and giving him my work to use as his own!

Aside from the enormous time it has taken here and there and elsewhere and despite the poor-cousin way of my life when I've been there, I suppose my trips to New Orleans account for another $1,000 of my indebtedness. I have asked Lil to go over our books and compute this figure, for if Moo is successful in raising anything for me for this work and the six weeks or so I will have to spend there, I will have to apply it to these costs - and I will have to use it to pay the niterest on this indebtedness. It is only recently Lou has had that junk car for me. In the past I've even had to pay car rental while those who had personal cars plus office cars could not spare one.

Some of it is pretty hard to swallow, Vince, and I tell this to you in confidence, for I do not want unthinking good people to be embarrassed. Let me give you a small example, current, of what I have to take in silence. I asked Maggie for her recommndations on Dealey-Plaza witnesses and what she had on Ruth and Marina that could be used on cross if the defense subpenas them. Finally, within the past several days, I got two sets of photocopies of her book. Now I will have to take the time to read them and do what I asked of Maggie. I do not mind the time, but is there not other work I will not get done because I take it? Yesterday Maggie phoned me to be certain I do not let it get in other hands. Dhe is right on this, and I would not have done it in any event. Throughout the call she kept telling me she had to go - and I know what she was really talking about was the cost of the call. So, those things I would have asked of her I could not and something much to her interest, her personal interest, I could not go into - because with all her wealth she is pinching pennies. Because this is the situation and I knew it, I had already used up some of diminishing supply of special copying paper I need for the N.O. work to send her photocopies of some of Lifton's stuff vital to her, and I had cut my little sleep that much more to write her about it. Mark, who now is loaded, brags about the luxury of his life when he is in LA, even in the papers, because he lives with her while he does nothing. I go out there without the money to buy myself a meal, work like hell, and have to sleep on a sofa in the flat of a very fine young woman who at that point was a total stranger simply because no arrangements had been made for me. Maggie has not stopped to think of it this way. She is a fine person, What she does with her home, her life and time, her money is her own affair. But how am I to read all of this? More, when she knows and shares my concern over the Hepburn things and Jaffe and its potential, and when I take the time to brief and background them and ask for everything they have, I do not get it. I have to find out by accident that they have questioned Jaffe, learn only a little of what they did and only when I take the initiative - and I've been negging for this. I want to be able to meet a motion for a mistrial. This is not for me. It is for everyone. Yesterday, when I told her I knew one of the three Jaffe "confessions" was on tape, she said she didn't have it, Ray did. I asked her to get it. She told me to phone Ray! I can afford that? I should have to? I asked her to speak to Leetha and she said she would. I probbly will not get the tape of, if I do, too late to be able to listen to it....You saw the N.O. end, what I have to keep silent about there. How much of this could you take?

So, before returning to work on things that I should not have to take this time away from, I again ask you to do what you can among the others, all of whom with means have found time to help everyone else, to try and take part of this load off

me - which really means my wife - to assume atleast part of their own responsibilities in this matter.

Lil went back to work this morning, though she is not in condition to, is not in good health. What is the laternative? She, too, has been working full time on this, and very hard, and awful hours. She will get little for it, but in so doing she reduces the rate of our increasing debt because she will be bringing in enough to pay for our food and a few other such things - not the actual cost of our life needs.

Sometimes I feel very badly about what this has done to her - every time I think of it. It has made a premature old woman of her, ruined her life, and inevitably places a great burden on her. There is little doubt that I will be paying with an abbreviated life for the past five years and what lies ahead. No man can go at the pace I have and do without materially shortening his life. Right now it looks like, aside from all the other costs and problems it will make for her, and the lonliness it will bring her prematurely, she will be saddled with the debt that is the consequence of what I do, to all practical intents and purposes, without help.

Perhaps there is nothing you can do, but I would like you to think about it and, if a ything seems possible, try and do it. She should not be paying the costs of others, whhich is the end result, as I should not now be doing it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

How are thigss going? I just had a call from Moo. Do I know anything about Jim Chaney? Aside from what I've published, two weeks ago I sent a memo on him, recommending that he be called as a witnesses! It apparently hasn't been read! Now I have to drop everything else and locate Chaney by phone! They do not know even why I urged that he be called! Perhaps I can do it now, but there is something else I will thereby not be able to do. I've got the calls in and await callbacks. Not one of those investigators can do this simple thingx? It is not normal in the life of a policeman? Or an assistant DA?